



POP Briefs

USAID's Population Assistance Program: Overview and Accomplishments

USAID has been the acknowledged leader in implementing the U.S. global population program since 1965. The agency's family planning and reproductive health assistance has improved the lives of millions of women and children and is recognized as vital to U.S. foreign policy interests. USAID's program is unique because of the strong presence of technical staff in the field and its effective partnerships with organizations that include U.S. and foreign NGOs, universities, and the private sector. With these partners, USAID delivers assistance in more than 65 countries through 95 bilateral and worldwide programs.

USAID's program goals:

- To contribute to a global effort to stabilize world population growth and protect human health. The objectives:
- To promote the ability of couples and individuals to determine freely and responsibly the number and spacing of their children, by maximizing access to and improving the quality of family planning.
- To reduce population growth rates to levels consistent with sustainable development.

The impact of USAID investments in family planning and reproductive health

- Since 1965, the use of modern family planning methods in the developing world has more than quadrupled – from less than 10 percent to over 40 percent.
- In the 28 countries with the largest USAID-sponsored programs, the average number of children per family has declined by one-third, from more than six to less than four.
- USAID assistance created strong U.S. trading partners including Korea, Taiwan, and Thailand.

USAID innovations in services and programs.

- To make family planning more accessible to people in hard-to-reach areas, the Agency introduced door-to-door distribution, mobile clinic services, employee-based programs, and more.
 - USAID pioneered contraceptive social marketing which privatized contraceptive distribution and marketing, making commodities more available and at affordable prices.
 - To inform the public about the importance of contraception, child care, and health, USAID supports the world's largest education programs that use in-country mass media and local entertainment outlets and performers to tell the story.
 - To help donors, program managers, and policy makers assess impact and make informed decisions about program design and management, USAID created the largest repository of fertility and family health information, the Demographic and Health Survey.
- ### USAID is a world leader in developing new and improved contraceptive methods.
- Agency research has improved existing contraceptive technology, providing couples in developing countries with superior methods of family planning.
 - USAID gives high priority to providing contraceptive supplies and quality assurance. The Agency provides 50 to 70% of all contraceptive assistance and nearly all logistics management assistance.



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How population assistance is delivered:

- Bilateral and regional programs are carried out by field missions in Africa, Asia, the Near East, Eastern Europe, the Newly Independent States, Latin America, and the Caribbean.

- Cooperative agreements and contracts with private agencies support field programs. This assistance draws on a wide range of expertise and provides all the essential elements for effective family planning programs: service delivery, contraceptive supplies, training for medical and health care providers and other personnel, information materials, strengthening management skills, policy support, and applied research. The work supports and complements that of the field missions. Eighty-five percent of recipients of this funding are non-governmental organizations (NGOs).

- Multilateral assistance is provided through support to the World Health Organization. The State Department provides funds for family planning programs to the United Nations Population Fund.

- Coordination with other donors and recipient countries increases the Agency's reach. The U.S./Japan Common Agenda led the Japanese government to commit to \$3 billion for population and HIV/AIDS activities. Developing country governments and citizens have now assumed 80 percent of the costs for national family planning programs.

USAID's program benefits Americans.

- Investment in family planning programs lessens the long-term consequences of poverty, environmental degradation and resource scarcity, and decreases the risk of socio-political breakdowns and humanitarian crises. Many countries that invest in family planning programs to improve the lives of their citizens join these programs with investments in education and other programs that promote and improve human capital.

- Early U.S. investments in family planning have paid off in many countries that are now strong trading partners of the U.S., such as Korea, Taiwan, and Thailand, and that are strategically important, such as Egypt and

Indonesia. The U.S. now exports more to South Korea in one year than the total level of U.S. assistance ever provided.

- USAID's population program has promoted the development of safe, effective contraceptive technologies in the U.S., accounting for thousands of research, development, and manufacturing jobs. Americans also have profited from this research, through the introduction of such methods as low-dose oral contraceptives and the female condom.

Program Successes:

The government of Morocco has been a leading recipient of USAID family planning assistance for three decades. Assistance is being phased out, and the government is taking over. Because of USAID support, thousands of providers were trained and innovative service delivery and management systems were developed. Since 1983, use of modern contraceptives has more than doubled and today, 49 percent of married women of reproductive age use contraception. Average family size has declined by almost half, to 3.1 children, and maternal deaths have dropped from more than 3,000 annually to less than 1,500 annually.

USAID supported family planning and reproductive health programs in Brazil for more than 30 years, phasing out support for family planning in 2000 once activities became self-sustaining. Over the years, the Agency's programs in Brazil, particularly those delivered in the northeast which is the largest underserved region in the country, helped establish a supportive environment for family planning. Programs concentrated on providing family planning services, training health care providers, conducting basic demographic and operations research, and developing strategies to include the public and private commercial sectors in reproductive health care provision.

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